

l: Karsten--219
841

(1916-18) 1935
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Jivaro

"When among the CANELOS INDIANS a woman is menstruating she is obliged to diet and does not leave the house except for the most urgent needs."

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Jivaro-1

"When the first signs of puberty appear, an important epoch in the life of the Jibaro girl begins. As among all Indians, menstruation is looked upon by the Jibaros as a mysterious process, and when it appears for the first time in a girl various precautions are considered necessary. I have mentioned before that the Indians ascribe menstruation to the moon (nantu weinikama, 'the moon has seen her'), which is also believed to have a mysterious influence upon conception. The first menstruation is called numbuén (from númba, 'blood') and generally appears when the girl is about 8 to 10 years old. When the mother realises what is the matter with the girl she at once takes her down to the river, where she washes her with a big leaf called yambáki. She has now to submit to certain taboos for four days. She is not allowed to pass the nights in the house, but sleeps in a small shelter specially made for her in the plantation in the neighbourhood, whither she is accompanied in the evening by the other women. While in the shelter, she can eat or drink nothing except tobacco water, which is given her in repeated doses by an old woman. The girl, however, is not obliged to stay there during the day. As soon as the sun rises she can leave the shelter and return to the house where she spends the day, but she is obliged to diet strictly. At the same time a small drinking-feast is arranged. Several piningas with manioc-beer are placed in a row; among these there is a small one containing only the 'cream' of the beer and a piece of manioc. This pininga is for the tsángrama, as the girl is called. She is allowed to eat nothing during the four

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Jivaro-2

days except this small quantity of manioc, and she is considered so taboo that she can touch no objects in the house with her hands. In the evening, as usual, she has to go to the shelter where she again receives tobacco water from the hands of the old woman, and so on. The tobacco medicine is supposed to fill her with power and to protect her against evil spirits who are attacking her, but it is also calculated to produce dreams for her, since the Numbuén, feast has reference at the same time to the girl's future obligations as a housewife."

"Speaking of the first menstruation of girls, we must add that at the following menses too a Jibaro woman is always taboo to a certain extent. She has to diet, abstaining from eating meat, and contenting herself during the days of menstruation chiefly with mashed manioc and plantain (nauma). She is likewise sexually taboo, her husband avoiding her during these critical days. Much the same rules are observed among the Canelos Indians."

28: Tessman--360

(No date) 1930

Jivaro

116, 841

The Chiwaros have no menstruation customs.

be unprotected from rain and possible attackers, a large floor area is essential. A large house also makes it possible for neighboring relatives to congregate in the dwelling to make a combined stand against an expected enemy attack. Space needs are, in addition, particularly great when a *ruma* feast is given, since large numbers of guests dance and sleep within the house on such occasions. Under such circumstances, extra beds are built to line the walls.

The Jivaro divide the house conceptually and functionally into two halves: the men's end (*sayamala*), and the women's (*chenta*). The men's half serves as a parlor and sleeping place for visitors. A couple of stools and a log door post or two serving as a bench are usually found in this end for the host and his visitors (Figure 1, H, E, F₁). The house owner's personal palm or bamboo slat bed is also located in the men's end (Figure 1, G) and, when there are visitors, is slept on by those male guests unaccompanied by wives. Sometimes, if there is not enough bed space, visitors will sleep on banana leaves spread on the dirt floor in the men's end of the house.

When there are no guests, the house owner uses the bed for his daytime napping, and for nighttime sleeping alone when his wife is menstruating or angry with him. Otherwise he sleeps with his wife on her bed in the women's half of the house. If he has more than one wife, there is a bed for each (Figure 1, J, C). Often an extra bed or two is also installed on the women's side for married couples who are visiting, or for a daughter and her husband during the period of temporary matrilineal residence within the house (Figure 1, D). Such beds are also utilized by children who no longer sleep on their mother's bed. Split bamboo (*Guadua* sp.) shelves are suspended in the women's end between the center posts (Figure 1, M) and palm slat or split bamboo shelves (Figure 1, I) along the walls. These are used to store pottery and baskets of pea-